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### BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING - OCTOBER 2015

**Meeting.** The Board of Corrections met October 2, 2015, in Des Moines. The Board elected Reverend Michael Coleman as Chair and Richard LaMere as Vice Chair. Director Jerry Bartruff updated the Board on significant activities related to:

- Justice system reform.
- Overrepresentation of people of color in the justice system.
- Offender reentry.
- Use of restrictive housing for punishment and behavior modification. The national trend is to reduce the use of restrictive housing because it has detrimental effects on offenders' psychological health.
- New staff. Forty new staff graduated from pre-service training in September. Most of them will be assigned to the Mitchellville and Clarinda Correctional Facilities. An additional 40 new recruits will start the pre-service training in October.
- Statewide Recidivism Reduction Initiative (SRRI) Summit held September 22 at the State Capitol.
- Governor's Work Group on Justice System Policy Reform, focusing on mental health, drug courts, jury pool selection, juvenile court records, and state prison and county jail telephone rates.
- Association of State Correctional Administrators ([ASCA](#)) symposium held in Atlanta, GA.
- Iowa Criminal Justice System Summit held at the University of Northern Iowa. This Summit focused on overrepresentation of people of color in the justice system. Topics included reentry, sentencing and criminal justice system reform, employment, and training.

**Records Administrator.** Director Bartruff indicated Tamia Salvati, Chief Records Administrator at the Oakdale Correctional Facility, is retiring in December. He announced Janet Fliehler has accepted the position.

**Landscape Architecture.** Assistant Professor Julie Sevens and landscape architecture students from Iowa State University ([ISU](#)) have been working with the Department of Corrections ([DOC](#)) since 2010 at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women (ICIW) at Mitchellville. The American Society of Landscape Architecture ([ASLA](#)) awarded the project the Community Service Award of Excellence for work completed in 2013 and 2014. This ongoing project creates a humane and restorative landscape in a restrictive environment. Click [here](#) to view the press release.

**Warden Appointments.** Director Bartruff announced the new wardens as Bill Sperfslage at the Anamosa State Penitentiary, Sheryl Dahm at the Clarinda Correctional Facility, and Jay Nelson at the Mount Pleasant Correctional Facility. All have served in various positions within the DOC, and bring many years of experience to the positions. Director Bartruff also indicated the Sex Offender Treatment Program will be moved from Mount Pleasant to the Newton Correctional Facility. The Mount Pleasant Correctional Facility will be operating as a minimum security facility to focus on offender reentry.

**Jail Diversion.** David Higdon from [Polk County Health Services](#) presented information to the Board on the jail diversion program. He stressed the importance of collaboration between the criminal justice and mental health systems. About 25.0% of jail detainees have a mental health diagnosis. Polk County works closely with the Fifth Judicial District Department of Correctional Services to divert people from county jail and the criminal justice system.

**Adult Drug Courts.** Deputy Director Sally Kreamer and Research Director Lettie Prell provided information to the Board regarding specialty courts. Drug courts operate across the state, focused on reducing recidivism of high-risk offenders through immediate sanctions and incentives. These courts have substance abuse and mental health treatment components. There are also mental health courts in Council Bluffs and Ottumwa as well as a Veteran's Court in Sioux City. Drug courts have been shown to reduce recidivism by 25.0% if operated with fidelity. It is a staff intensive and expensive program to

operate. Certain high-risk offenders are not good candidates for drug courts; there may be cultural barriers. African American offenders are underrepresented in drug courts. Other programs, such as culturally specific Intensive Supervision with Risk Needs Responsivity Model, may be an alternative. Community-Based Corrections (CBC) District Directors were forced to prioritize spending to remain within the budget parameters of FY 2016. The Ottumwa Drug Court remains open with reduced staff, urinalysis testing, and court appearances. The Council Bluffs program may close. Click [here](#) for the Return on Investment report published by the DOC in May 2012. Refer to the **Issue Review** [Cost-Benefit Analysis of Adult Drug Courts](#) published by the LSA in December 2013 for a summary of national and Iowa research on program effectiveness, funding, and cost-benefit analysis.

**Recidivism Reduction Summit.** Project Manager Beth Skinner informed the Board of the Summit held September 22 in Des Moines. Staff from Minnesota and Illinois attended the Summit as well as a meeting the next day to discuss what each state is doing to reduce recidivism. The states want to work together to implement successful initiatives. The Statewide Recidivism Reduction Initiative Task Force met in Des Moines on September 25. Ms. Skinner also provided social media links for the Statewide Recidivism Reduction Initiative, including Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Iowa-Statewide-Recidivism-Reduction-Initiative/903191956414305?pnref=lhc>; twitter: <http://twitter.com/statewideRecid>; and youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McT4zy75\\_cQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McT4zy75_cQ).

**Victim Impact Program.** Deputy Director Dot Faust addressed the DOC's elimination of the Victim Impact Program in the corrections system. The DOC understands that victims need to talk about the impact of the crime and offenders need to recognize and acknowledge their impact on victims. The DOC concentrates on providing programs that reduce recidivism to reduce the number of victims. National and Iowa evaluations have found victim impact programs to be ineffective in reducing risk. Both Parole/Probation Officers (PPOs) and Counselors work with victims. The DOC is collaborating with professional victim advocacy groups. The Third CBC District Department operates a victim empathy class as part of its restorative justice program.

**Public Comments.** Several members of the public spoke about restorative justice and the worth of victim impact programs. A representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness ([NAMI](#)) spoke to the Board about supporting mental health treatment funding outside of the criminal justice system.

**Next Meeting.** The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 6 in Des Moines. For additional information, see the DOC website at: <http://www.doc.state.ia.us/> and the Board of Corrections tab: <http://www.doc.state.ia.us/BoardOfCorrections>.

**STAFF CONTACT:** Beth Lenstra (515-281-6301) [beth.lenstra@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:beth.lenstra@legis.iowa.gov)